

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter in this application.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph. The Examiner states that it is unclear what is being referred to by “the electromechanical switch” in line 9 of claim 1. The Applicant has amended claim 1 and all depending claims to provide clarification as to the proper interpretation.

Claim 21 has been amended to provide sufficient antecedent basis for the limitation “the first fixed electrode” in lines 12 and 15 of the claim.

Additionally, claim 1 has been amended to remove the phrase “adapted to”.

Claims 1, 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Hopcroft (U.S. Patent No. 6,621,387) hereinafter “Hopcroft”. It is also alleged by the Examiner that a recitation of an element or limitation using the phrase “adapted to” performs a function that is not a positive limitation and only requires the ability to perform the limitation. Applicant has amended claim 1 to remove the phrase “adapted to” so that all the limitations in the claim are considered.

Accordingly, Hopcroft fails to disclose “a first electromechanical switch that ... is restorable by a relatively weak spring force; and a second electromechanical switch that... is restorable by a relatively strong spring force” as claimed in claim 1. Hopcroft is silent on the limitation, and therefore fails to disclose that a first electromechanical switch

may have a different force required to move than the second electromechanical switch.

Therefore, Hopcroft fails to anticipate claim 1.

As claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are dependent either directly or indirectly on claim 1, claims 2, 4, 5, 9, 10, 12, 13, 16, and 21 are patentable for at least the same reasons as the parent claim.

Claims 1 and 3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Nelson (U.S. Patent No. 7,053,736), hereinafter "Nelson". As stated above, the phrase "adapted to" has been removed from claim 1 so that all the limitations in the claim are considered. Accordingly, Nelson fails to disclose "a first electromechanical switch that ... is restorable by a relatively weak spring force; and a second electromechanical switch that... is restorable by a relatively strong spring force" as claimed in claim 1. As with Hopcroft, Nelson is silent on the limitation, and therefore fails to disclose that a first electromechanical switch may have a different force required to move than the second electromechanical switch. Therefore, Nelson fails to anticipate claim 1.

As claim 3 is dependent on claim 1, claim 3 is patentable for at least the same reasons as the parent claim.

Claims 6-8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) over Hopcroft. For at least the following reasons, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed. Claim 1, from which claims 6-8 depend, has been amended. Therefore, the rejection has been rendered moot. The asserted reference of Hopcroft does not teach or suggest all features of amended claim 1. Accordingly, Hopcroft fails to disclose "a first electromechanical switch that...is restorable by a relatively weak spring force; and a second electromechanical switch that...is restorable by a relatively strong spring force" as

claimed in claim 1. Therefore, every limitation of claims 6-8 would not be taught, suggested, or otherwise rendered obvious or predictable by the prior art of record. Thus, Applicant respectfully submits that claims 6-8 are patentable over the prior art of record.

The Examiner has also stated that claims 11, 14, 17, 18-20 and 22 are allowable, but for depending upon a rejected base claim. The Applicant agrees that claims 11, 14, 17, 18-20 and 22 contain allowable subject matter, but elects not to amend them at this time.

In light of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned agent to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No.: NGB-41317.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: April 21, 2009

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